

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

5 An apparatus for driving and tensioning a ribbon includes a supply spindle for supplying a ribbon, a supply dancer assembly for applying tension to the ribbon, a printhead, a take-up dancer assembly for applying tension to the ribbon, and a take-up spindle for collecting spent ribbon. The supply dancer assembly is positioned downstream of the supply spindle. The printhead is positioned downstream of the supply dancer assembly. The take-up dancer assembly is downstream of the printhead. The take-up spindle is downstream of the take-up dancer assembly.